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
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THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

TO:	Examiner: Steadman	FROM:	SHELLY GUEST CERMAK
FAX:	703.872.9306	REF. NO:	US-1310
VOICE:		PAGES	3 (incl. this sheet)
App. No.:	09/926,299	DATE:	January 14, 2004

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- 1) Response to Restriction (2 pages)


Shelly Guest Cermak
Registration Number 39,571

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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of: Gunji et al.

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Application No.: 09/926,299

Art Unit: 1652

Filing Date: October 9, 2001

Examiner: Steadman

For: L-AMINO ACID PRODUCING
BACTERIUM AND METHOD FOR
PRODUCING L-AMINO ACID

Attorney Ref. No.: US-1310

VIA FACSIMILE TO: 703 872 9306

RESPONSE TO REQUIREMENT FOR RESTRICTIONMail Stop Non-fee Amendment
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

In response to the Office Action dated December 16, 2003, which set a 1-month shortened statutory period for response thereto, applicants hereby elect **Group I, claims 1-13 and 26-27, with traverse.**

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's assertion that the groups of inventions do not have a common technical feature which represents a contribution over the prior art. Applicants assert that all the claims contain the feature of a methylophilus bacterium having increased activities of certain enzyme activities which results in the unexpected increase in amino acid producing ability. Applicants respectfully request that the groups be re-joined and the claims examined all together.

Applicant respectfully submits that the present patent application is in condition for allowance. An early indication of the allowability of the present patent application is therefore respectfully solicited.


Att'y Dkt. No. US-1310

U.S. App. No:09/926,299

If Examiner Steadman believes that a telephone conference with the undersigned would expedite passage of the present patent application to issue, he is invited to call on the number below.

It is not believed that extensions of time are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in accompanying documents. However, if additional extensions of time are necessary to prevent abandonment of this application, then such extensions of time are hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a), and the undersigned respectfully requests that she be contacted immediately.

Respectfully submitted,


Shelly Guest Cermak
Reg. No. 39,571

Date: January 14, 2004

PTO Customer Number: 000038108

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